

Civil Society Welcomes Bipartisan Legislation to Tackle Global Violence

Quotes of Support from Civil Society

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Alliance for Peacebuilding

“Over the past fifteen years, 53 countries and nearly half the world’s population, 3.34 billion, have experienced political violence, with devastating effects to populations and development. 2014 and 2015 were the second and third highest years in terms of civilian fatalities due to violence since the end of the Cold War. Clearly, we need a new paradigm. In addition to the moral imperative of saving lives and preventing human misery, we know that every dollar spent on violence prevention saves more than \$16 on the costs of mitigating the damage of war. With this calculus, there is no excuse for not investing more heavily in violence prevention and learning to overcome the obstacles to preventive thinking.”

– Melanie Greenberg, President and CEO, Alliance for Peacebuilding

CARE

“In certain countries, nearly three-quarters of women report experiencing gender-based violence at some point in their lives – often impeding women’s social, political and economic participation, which is essential to the stability of communities. If the United States aims to build strong, inclusive communities, it must take coordinated steps toward a sustained and coherent policy that addresses the root causes of all types of violence. CARE supports the Global Fragility & Violence Reduction Act in order to better align resources and policies to reduce the violence that results in fragility and large-scale conflict”

– David Ray, Vice President for Policy and Advocacy, CARE

The Carl Wilkens Fellowship

“From the recent tragedy in Las Vegas to the on-going humanitarian crisis in Burma-Myanmar, instances of mass violence are occurring with alarming frequency across the globe. It is time for the United States to take purposeful action to reduce and prevent future atrocities. The Global Fragility and Violence Reduction Act is a crucial step towards achieving this goal and fulfilling

the US' promise to be a global leader in advocating for the peace and security of all people. The Carl Wilkens Fellowship strongly supports this bill.”

– Kiel Majewski, Executive Director of the Carl Wilkens Fellowship

Cure Violence

“Violence is among the most significant health problems not only because of death and injury, but also because of the harm, fear, and trauma caused to families and communities. Exposure to violence leads to a broad range of mental and physical health problems that disproportionately impact children, youth, and vulnerable communities. We must do more to prevent violence from occurring in the first place rather than responding to it after the fact. Reducing violence not only saves lives and money, it increases the likelihood of success and potential impact of assistance programs addressing other factors, which are often gravely undermined by the presence of violence. Cure Violence is proud to support the Global Fragility and Violence Reduction Act of 2018.”

– Dr. Gary Slutkin, Founder and CEO, Cure Violence

Friends Committee on National Legislation

“Peace and the reduction of violent conflict can happen with a concerted commitment to ending this scourge that destroys lives and communities across the globe. Growing levels of global violence counter our belief in shared security and human dignity. The Friends Committee on National Legislation calls on Congress to make prudent investments in the peacebuilding and development tools needed to successfully inoculate against outbreaks of future violence and truly build sustainable peace.”

– Diane Randall, Executive Secretary, Friends Committee on National Legislation

iACT

“Today there are more people who have been forced to flee their homes and countries due to violence than ever before in recorded history. There is a dire need for humanitarian action across the globe to uphold the dignity and rights of these individuals. The Global Fragility and Violence Reduction Act assists humanitarian efforts by addressing and tackling fundamental causes of conflict to prevent future instances of mass atrocities. iACT is a proud supporter of this bill and of its effort to reduce violence around the world.”

– Gabriel Stauring, Founding Executive Director of iACT

International Alert

“The pursuit of peace has become more urgent as conflict rises, millions have been displaced and the international system struggles to cope. Despite this escalating conflict-crisis, peacebuilding – dealing with the root causes of conflict – remains the poor cousin of military, diplomatic and humanitarian interventions. It needs to be an equal partner, the fourth pillar of our conflict response, if we want to see sustainable progress in peace globally. This bill represents action; an

attempt genuinely to realise the full potential of a peacebuilding approach. We welcome this innovative initiative by the U.S. Congress and we call on European legislators to follow suit.”
– Harriet Lamb, CEO, International Alert

Jewish World Watch

“The United States government’s ability to prevent violent conflict, before violence breaks out, is directly tied to the priorities it sets and investments it makes. We know what the root causes and drivers of violent conflict are. We know how to best prevent mass atrocities. Unfortunately, the U.S. government until now has underinvested in long-term structural prevention that would address root causes. The Global Fragility and Violence Reduction Act is a much needed step in the right direction toward prioritizing holistic violence reduction and prevention strategies overseas.”

– Mike Brand, Director of Advocacy and Programs, Jewish World Watch

Mercy Corps

“The world is experiencing a frightening 25-year peak in violent conflict, trapping millions of innocent men, women and children in endless cycles of poverty and displacement. The need for conflict prevention and peace building has never been more urgent, and this bill is a huge first step in the right direction.”

– Neal Keny-Guyer, Chief Executive Officer, Mercy Corps

Peace Direct

“This initiative would help ensure those most impacted by violent conflict have a stronger voice in driving policy and building peace in their communities. By giving local civil society a real seat at the table in designing and leading solutions to the problems they face, it will make the international community’s work to reduce violence and build lasting peace more effective, less costly, and more sustainable.”

– Bridget Moix, Senior US Representative and Head of Advocacy

World Vision

“Violence is a primary driver of displacement, fragility, and extreme poverty. If we want to reach the world’s most vulnerable children with humanitarian assistance and partner for long term sustainable development, we must address the drivers of violent conflict. World Vision whole heartedly supports the Global Fragility & Violence Reduction Act, a strategic effort to reduce global levels of violence and address the root causes of chronic instability.”

– Robert Zachritz, Vice President of Advocacy and Government Relations, World Vision

Search for Common Ground

"No matter what the goal of U.S. foreign assistance is in any given context, it will be jeopardized - if not made completely unattainable - by widespread violence in the communities receiving that

assistance. This bill will not only save and improve lives, but it will also be leveraged many times over by establishing the foundation upon which all other foreign assistance goals can be attained and secured. Search for Common Ground is pleased to endorse this bill."

– Shamil Idriss, President and CEO, Search for Common Ground

STAND: Student-Led Movement to End Mass Atrocities

"Civil society and practitioners have long attested that the United States and international community are more capable of saving lives and stabilizing at-risk communities when we approach violence from a preventative rather than reactionary lens. This bill provides a framework for investing in, evaluating, and implementing violence reduction strategies over time. It focuses on the broader systems that prompt and sustain violence rather than merely putting 'bandaids on bullet holes.' This legislation is the long-overdue future of mass violence reduction and, as an organization dedicated to ending and preventing genocide and mass atrocities, STAND is thrilled to endorse it."

– Savannah Wooten, Student Director, STAND: The Student-Led Movement to End Mass Atrocities